

TRANSCRIPTION - ORIGINAL FOLLOWS

The referenced cable copy (attached) subjects Embassy Kabul's excellence and comprehensive analysis of the Taraki regime's prospects for survival and discusses various scenarios which could lead to its demise. The Embassy's conclusion, with which we concur, is that the regime continues to control the key levers of power in Afghanistan (the party, the military, and the bureaucracy) and that despite continuing exposition from traditional, tribal, and religious elements of Afghan society its chances for survival with strong Soviet support remains [illeg] at least in the short term.

There are a number of possible scenarios which could lead to a change of governments in Kabul. These include (1) "palace revolt" of dissatisfied party cadre; (2) disaffection within the military anticipated by unhappiness with continued fighting against other Afghans, dissatisfaction with the increasing role of Soviet advisers, or disagreement with DRA policies and ideology; (3) a popular uprising taking its cue from events in Iran; and (4) loss of the countryside to the insurgents while the central government retains a control of Kabul, major cities and the principal means of communications.



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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

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TO: P - Mr. Rowson

FROM: NEA - Harold H. S.

REF: Kabul 2423

8400128

Prospects for the Taziki Regime

The referenced cable, very attached, subject Embassy Kabul's excellent and comprehensive analysis of the Taziki regime's prospects for survival and discussed various scenarios which could lead to its demise. The Embassy's conclusion, with which we concur, is that the regime continues to count on key levers of power in Afghanistan (the party, the military, and the bureaucracy) and that despite continuing opposition from traditional, tribal, and religious elements of Afghan society its chances for survival with strong Soviet support remain good at least in the short term.

There are a number of possible scenarios which could lead to a change of government in Kabul. These include (1) "palace revolt" of dissatisfied party cadre; (2) dissatisfaction within the military precipitated by unhappiness with continued fighting against other Afghans, dissatisfaction with the increasing role of Soviet advisers, or disagreement with DRA policies and ideology; (3) a popular uprising taking its cue from events in Iran; and (4) loss of the countryside to the insurgents while the central government retains control of Kabul, major cities and the principal means of communications.

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In attempting to further consolidate its position and to extend its authority throughout Afghan society and its traditional religious institutions, the Taraki regime faces opposition on a number of fronts. The bulk of the Afghan population regards the regime as communist and atheistic and too closely aligned with the Soviet Union. The clerical class, particularly the [illeg] clergy could conceivably represent formidable foe, one which the DRA's recent arrests of mullahs indicate is recognized by the current Afghan leadership. Religious-based opposition to the DRA's reform program, animosity toward the Russians, ethnic rivalries and blood feuds which could also include disgruntled leftists (Parchamites) who seek revenge for the continuing Khalqi purge of their numbers.

In the Embassy's judgement, the key external factor in the continued survival of the Taraki Government is support from Moscow. The recent Soviet propaganda barrage against foreign interference in Afghanistan and the stepped up Soviet military supply effort indicate that the USSR is prepared to go to great lengths to insure the survival of a leftist regime in Kabul. It remains possible that the Soviets could eventually lose confidence in the ability of the Taraki clique to institutionalize the Afghan revolution and therefore might promote, or acquiesce in, alternative leadership in Kabul.

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Attachment:

Kabul 2328

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